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Held at Headquarters, New York, on Tuesday, 8 November 2005, at 10 a.m.

Chairman: Mr. Butagira ..... (Uganda)
later: Ms. Tomič (Vice-Chairman) ..... (Slovenia)
later: Mr. Butagira (Chairman) ..... (Uganda)

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* Items which the Committee has decided to consider together.

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The meeting was called to order at 10.10 a.m.

Agenda item 71: Human rights questions (*continued*)

(b) Human rights questions, including alternative approaches for improving the effective enjoyment of human rights and fundamental freedoms (*continued*) (A/C.3/60/L.30, L.33 and L.40)

Draft resolution A/C.3/60/L.30: Subregional Centre for Human Rights and Democracy in Central Africa

1. **Ms. Mahouve** (Cameroon), introducing the draft resolution on behalf of the original sponsors as well as Algeria and Guinea, said that the mandate of the Subregional Centre was to support the development of a culture of human rights and democracy in the countries of the Economic Community of Central African States (ECCAS) in order to prevent conflicts and promote peace and sustainable development. She encouraged other Member States to support the draft resolution and hoped that it would be adopted by consensus.

2. **The Chairman** said that Ghana, Mali, Kenya and Togo had also joined in sponsoring the draft resolution.

Draft resolution A/C.3/60/L.33: National institutions for the promotion and protection of human rights

3. **Mr. Yadav** (India) introduced the draft resolution on behalf of the original sponsors as well as Australia, Ghana, Norway, the Republic of Korea, the Republic of Moldova, Romania, Senegal and Sri Lanka. He hoped that the draft resolution would be adopted without a vote.

4. **The Chairman** said that Afghanistan, Bangladesh, Guinea, Mexico, Nepal, Timor-Leste and Turkey had also joined in sponsoring the draft resolution.

Draft resolution A/C.3/60/L.40: Declaration on the Right and Responsibility of Individuals, Groups and Organs of Society to Promote and Protect Universally Recognized Human Rights and Fundamental Freedoms

5. **Ms. Ajamay** (Norway), introducing the draft resolution on behalf of the original sponsors as well as Albania, El Salvador, Israel, Jordan, Nigeria, the Republic of Korea, South Africa, Sri Lanka and the former Yugoslav Republic of Macedonia, said that the draft resolution called upon Member States to promote and give full effect to General Assembly resolution 53/144. She hoped that the draft resolution would be adopted by consensus.

6. **The Chairman** said that Burkina Faso, Lesotho and Turkey had also joined in sponsoring the draft resolution.

(c) Human rights situations and reports of special rapporteurs and representatives (*continued*) (A/C.3/60/L.41, L.45, L.46, L48 and L.53)

Draft resolution A/C.3/60/L.41: Situation of human rights in the Democratic Republic of the Congo

7. **Mr. Thomson** (United Kingdom), introducing the draft resolution on behalf of the sponsors, said that the human rights situation in the Democratic Republic of the Congo remained a matter of deep concern, particularly in the eastern part of the country. The draft resolution called on the transitional Government, the parties to the former conflict and the international community to take urgent action to protect civilians, to promote and protect human rights and to put an end to impunity in the Democratic Republic of the Congo. He hoped that the draft resolution would be adopted by consensus.

8. **The Chairman** said that Serbia and Montenegro had also joined in sponsoring the draft resolution.

Draft resolution A/C.3/60/L.45: Situation of human rights in the Islamic Republic of Iran

9. **Mr. Laurin** (Canada), introducing the draft resolution on behalf of the original sponsors as well as Croatia, said that the marked deterioration in the human rights situation in the Islamic Republic of Iran over the past year was a cause for serious concern and that the international community, through the draft resolution, called upon the Government to take action to improve that situation.

Draft resolution A/C.3/60/L.46: Situation of human rights in Turkmenistan

10. **Mr. Siv** (United States of America), introducing the draft resolution on behalf of the original sponsors as well as Albania and Switzerland, said that the Government of Turkmenistan had not adequately addressed human rights violations in Turkmenistan and

that the overall human rights situation had not improved since the previous year. The draft resolution was therefore necessary to focus the attention of the international community on that situation.

Draft resolution A/C.3/60/L.48: Situation of human rights in the Democratic People's Republic of Korea

11. **Mr. Thomson** (United Kingdom), introducing the draft resolution on behalf of the sponsors, said that Commission on Human Rights resolution 2005/11 had urged the General Assembly to take up the question of human rights in the Democratic People's Republic of Korea in the absence of any improvement in the human rights situation and if its Government failed to extend cooperation to the Special Rapporteur. The continued non-compliance by the Government with resolution 2005/11 required the General Assembly to address that issue and he therefore urged Member States to support the draft resolution.

12. **The Chairman** said that Serbia and Montenegro had also joined in sponsoring the draft resolution.

13. **Mr. Pak** Tok Hun (Democratic People's Republic of Korea) said that his Government had rejected resolution 2005/11 on the grounds that it was politically motivated, an example of selectivity and double standards, and not reflective of the actual human rights situation in the country.

Draft resolution A/C.3/60/L.53: Situation of human rights in Myanmar

14. **Mr. Thomson** (United Kingdom), introducing the draft resolution on behalf of the original sponsors as well as Switzerland, said that he hoped the draft resolution would be adopted without a vote as a sign of its concern for and solidarity with the people of Myanmar.

15. **The Chairman** said that the Republic of Korea and Serbia and Montenegro had also joined in sponsoring the draft resolution.

Agenda item 69: Elimination of racism and racial discrimination (*continued*) (A/60/18)

(a) Elimination of racism and racial discrimination (*continued*) (A/60/283 and 440; A/C.3/60/4)

(b) Comprehensive implementation of and follow-up to the Durban Declaration and Programme of Action (*continued*) (A/60/307 and 440)

Agenda item 70: Right of peoples to self-determination (*continued*) (A/60/111, 263, 268 and 319)

16. **Mr. Osmane** (Algeria) said that the United Nations had over the years made indisputable progress in combating apartheid, racism and racial discrimination. The 2001 Durban Declaration and Programme of Action were significant in that respect and all countries were morally obliged to put them into effect. Despite the commitments made, however, the same ills continued to be alarmingly present in several parts of the world. Migrant workers, non-nationals, refugees, asylum-seekers and minorities still suffered racist and xenophobic treatment. He noted from the Special Rapporteur's report (A/60/283) a slackening of worldwide effort to combat such behaviour and said that the Organization should maintain the impetus created by the Durban Conference.

17. The right of peoples to self-determination was one of the mandatory norms of international law and was inscribed in the Charter and other international instruments. The Organization owed its universality to the application of that principle, which had enabled many peoples throughout the world, including the Algerian people, to shake off the colonial yoke and attain independence. Decolonization nevertheless remained incomplete so long as the Palestinian and Western Saharan peoples were prevented from exercising that right. Algeria remained convinced that only a final settlement of the question of the Western Sahara, with due regard for the Sahrawis' right to self-determination, would bring peace and stability to the Maghreb region.

18. **Mr. Kitaoka** (Japan) said that the United Nations had developed a number of norms and mechanisms to counter racial discrimination, which was one of the most serious violations of human rights. However, globalization, increased migration and the development of high technology had contributed to its spread. In response to particular cases of racial discrimination, it was important to consider its background and causes, as well as its links with other forms of discrimination.

19. In Japan, national and local governmental bodies had taken measures to combat discrimination,

including a prohibition incorporated into a human rights protection bill which should soon be passed by Parliament. Convinced that racists were not born but created from ignorance and prejudice, Japan was promoting the development of a tolerant, multicultural society through education and awareness-raising as well as youth-exchange programmes with other countries. His Government remained committed to combating racial discrimination and would give serious consideration to the recommendations of the Special Rapporteur, following his recent visit to the country.

20. **Mr. Bernaza Fernández** (Cuba) said that democracy, human rights and freedom depended on the elimination of racism, racial discrimination and xenophobia, yet they were on the increase. Islam in particular was discredited and even demonized. In the United States of America, police had beaten an elderly black man in New Orleans; because of the FBI, Filiberto Ojeda, a Puerto Rican independence fighter, had bled to death; Mexican immigrants had suffered mistreatment; and prisoners at Guantánamo Naval Base were subjected to daily torture and humiliation. He attributed such cases to a belief in racial superiority and he called for the immediate implementation of the Durban Programme of Action. Transnational forces were seeking to impose a single political and economic model so as to facilitate their ideological domination of the world. New initiatives were called for in order to resolve key issues that had gone unanswered at Durban.

21. Cuba supported the Puerto Rican and Palestinian peoples' right to self-determination. Its own right to self-determination had been constantly challenged by a hegemonic Power that gave itself the unilateral right to attack any country. That same Power, the United States, had backed mercenary action against Cuba, causing thousands of victims. It was holding under its protection Luis Posada Carriles, responsible for the destruction of a Cubana de Aviación aircraft in October 1976, in defiance of Venezuela's request for his extradition, supported by the Heads of State of the Ibero-American community.

22. **Mr. Ritter** (Liechtenstein) said that, in contrast to the usual, exclusive focus on achieving independent statehood, the potential of the right to self-determination as a tool for conflict prevention and the consolidation of stability was yet to be fully explored. Many conflicts occurred because people sought independence as their only means of asserting their distinctiveness. Self-determination was however an ongoing process whereby peoples could establish their political status and pursue their economic, social and cultural development. It offered new prospects for peaceful coexistence other than secession and separate statehood. The right to self-determination should accordingly be considered with reference not just to peoples under foreign occupation but to all peoples and should lead to the discussion of different forms of self-governance and self-administration.

23. Liechtenstein had long been committed to the right to self-determination and had been seeking new ways of applying it in the interests of conflict prevention. It had thus in 2000 established an Institute on Self-Determination at Princeton University which was currently planning the Princeton Encyclopedia on Self-Governance and International Diplomacy, intended to serve as a unique tool for the analysis and resolution of self-determination issues.

24. *Ms. Tomič (Slovenia), Vice-Chairman, took the Chair.*

25. **Mr. Muñoz** (Chile) said that the Durban Declaration and Programme of Action echoed the action taken by Chile to combat racism. Since the establishment of democracy there in 1990, measures had been taken in support of macroeconomic policies for growth combined with social policies to ensure equal standards of living and equal opportunities for all citizens. The Government had laid emphasis on health services, housing, education, access to justice and support for the most vulnerable groups, including persons with disabilities and indigenous people. It had launched a programme against intolerance and discrimination and encouraged the involvement of citizens in the design of public policies respectful of cultural diversity. A network had been established, bringing together ministries and social services, along with a multicultural citizens' network representing vulnerable groups and minorities; the aim was to strengthen Chile's institutions in order to put an end to racial intolerance and discrimination in the country.

26. The President had recently announced a plan for equality and non-discrimination as a further tool to strengthen human rights and raise public awareness of the issues involved, guided by intergovernmental and non-governmental action. In its efforts to strengthen democracy, the Government was seeking to ensure increased citizen participation in decision-making.

Chile had the political will to make further progress in promoting human rights and in combating racism and racial discrimination in accordance with the Durban Declaration and Programme of Action, to which it remained committed.

27. **Mr. Abbas** (Iraq) said that the Government of Iraq reaffirmed its commitment to the International Convention on the Elimination of All Forms of Racial Discrimination, which it had ratified in 1971. The new Iraqi Constitution prohibited all forms of discrimination, and the Government was working to create a society free of discrimination and racism where national loyalty surpassed all others, and all citizens enjoyed basic freedoms. Constitutional recognition of the rights of minorities was a crucial building block of the new federal, pluralistic and democratic Iraq, which could succeed only with the support of the international community.

28. **Mr. Hijazi** (Observer for Palestine) said that Palestine's experience with racism and racial discrimination dated back to the year 1948, when more than 800,000 Palestinians had been forced to flee their historical homeland. Fifty-seven years later, four million Palestinian refugees were still waiting for the international community to award them the same rights as other refugees.

29. Israel's laws on return and nationality granted the right of immigration and citizenship to any person of the Jewish faith born anywhere in the world. Yet Palestinian refugees were denied the right to return to their homeland, as outlined in countless international resolutions.

30. Israel had funded and defended the creation of exclusively Jewish settlements in the Occupied Palestinian Territory, including East Jerusalem, in grave violation of the Fourth Geneva Convention and the International Convention on the Elimination of All Forms of Racial Discrimination, to which it was a party. It had even institutionalized a network of Israeli-only roads. Leading Israeli politicians and religious figures were permitted to make racist remarks against Palestinians without the slightest reproach and Israeli courts repeatedly passed light or suspended sentences against Israeli settlers and soldiers found guilty of murdering or brutalizing Palestinian civilians.

31. Israel's racist practices and policies had culminated in the erection of the colonial wall in the West Bank, including East Jerusalem. Those policies stripped Palestinians of their land, natural resources and basic elements of life such as schools and hospitals in order to grant rights and properties to Jewish Israeli settlers.

32. To cleanse itself of such racism, Israel must recognize its responsibility for the suffering it had caused the Palestinian people over the years. The international community also had a responsibility to ensure that all peoples were entitled to a life free of racial discrimination and policies driven by an irrational sense of racial, religious or ethnic supremacy.

33. **Mr. Elbadri** (Egypt) said that the right of self-determination was a basic principle of international law recognized by numerous international instruments. It was a collective right that was a prerequisite for many individual rights. It was the foundation of democracy, just as occupation and colonialism were the natural enemies of democracy. The international community should take every opportunity to reaffirm the right to self-determination, and should be on constant guard against it being subverted for political reasons.

34. That right was not a gift but an inalienable right that applied as much to the Palestinians as to any other people suffering under the yoke of occupation. The failure of the international community to enable the Palestinian people to exercise that right constituted a form of discrimination against a people that had struggled so long to establish its own State on its own national soil. Although the recent withdrawal of occupation forces from Gaza and parts of the West Bank had created a relatively positive climate, the cycle of violence continued because of economic strangulation, partition, siege, encirclement by the separation wall, and Israel's continued obstruction of genuine implementation of the road map.

35. Israel's continued occupation was contrary to the natural flow of history. The age of occupation and colonialism had ended, but the Palestinian people continued to be barred from entering the age of democracy and freedom. Denial of the Palestinian right to self-determination only served to exacerbate regional tensions, extremism and hatred between peoples. Granting them that right could serve as a model for efforts to guarantee human rights in other regions.

36. **Mr. Abusif** (Libyan Arab Jamahiriya) said that, despite international efforts, racism continued to be practised in many places, even if sometimes concealed

from view. Refugees and indigenous peoples were victims of racism, as were increasing numbers of migrant workers. It was saddening that States that had signed human rights instruments were able to violate them with impunity. Israel's actions against the Palestinian people, which included brutalization, home demolition and expulsion, were the height of discrimination. The racist separation wall was dividing the Palestinian people into two, while the Israelis continued to ignore General Assembly resolution ES-10/15 on that matter, as it had other United Nations resolutions and international instruments.

37. Since the tragic events of 11 September 2001, a campaign had been launched by Western media to associate the Islamic religion with terrorism. In fact, every State interpreted "terrorism" to suit its own interests. The accusations of terrorism levelled against Arab and Islamic communities around the world constituted racial discrimination in the form of a ruthless campaign against religion, culture and civilization that the international community must confront.

38. The principle of self-determination enshrined in the Charter was an inspiration to peoples all over the world, not least the Palestinian people, who had been struggling since 1948 to determine their fate on their own land, which had been taken from them by force. Impunity for crimes motivated by racism and xenophobia weakened the rule of law and democracy. With regard to mercenaries, more dialogue and study of the International Convention against the Recruitment, Use, Financing and Training of Mercenaries (1989) was necessary to make progress towards its ratification.

39. **Ms. García-Matos** (Bolivarian Republic of Venezuela) said that her Government did not permit discrimination on the basis of race or gender. The Constitution guaranteed equality before the law and provided measures in favour of groups or persons who might otherwise be discriminated against, especially the most vulnerable. An independent public body had been established to ensure that all human rights were respected.

40. The Constitution also recognized the rights of indigenous peoples, including their social, political and economic organization, culture, language and religion. A special programme called "Misión Guaicaipuro" had been created to ensure the implementation of those rights and the full inclusion of indigenous peoples in society. The programme included the establishment of microbanks and the provision of study grants.

41. In conclusion, she said that the Government remained committed to the right of peoples to self-determination.

42. **Mr. Akram** (Pakistan) said that the exercise of the right to self-determination had enabled nations and people to gain independence from colonial Powers and that the whole system of international relations was based on that right.

43. Four principles needed to be reaffirmed. The forcible occupation of the territory of a people whose right to self-determination had been recognized was a clear violation of international law and the Charter; self-determination could not be freely exercised under foreign military occupation and repression; the right to self-determination could not be extinguished by the passage of time; and the legitimate struggle for self-determination could not be portrayed as terrorism.

44. The peoples of Jammu, Kashmir and Palestine had all been prevented from exercising their right to self-determination. In fact, six decades had elapsed since the Kashmiri people had been promised the right to self-determination by relevant Security Council resolutions. After decades of confrontation and conflict over Jammu and Kashmir, Pakistan and India had finally undertaken a dialogue but had not managed to reach a settlement. Pakistan continued to emphasize the necessity for all sides to demonstrate flexibility in the search for a solution that was acceptable to India, Pakistan and, above all, the people of Jammu and Kashmir. In its opinion, the solution would be facilitated by demilitarizing Jammu and Kashmir, releasing all political prisoners in Kashmir, and ending the violation of the human rights of the people of Jammu and Kashmir. It should be remembered that such violations could not be justified by portraying the legitimate struggle for self-determination as terrorism.

45. In accordance with their obligations under the Charter and the International Covenants on Human Rights, the international community should enable the people of Jammu and Kashmir to exercise their right to self-determination and end their suffering.

46. **Ms. Halabi** (Syrian Arab Republic) said that both the elimination of racism and the right of peoples to self-determination had been central concerns of the

United Nations since its founding. Racism historically had been the root of much of the world's evil, and in the present day, racism against Arabs and Muslims under the guise of combating terrorism was particularly disturbing. The Special Rapporteur's report (A/60/283) was very informative in this regard. It was also saddening that in the twenty-first century, entire peoples continued to be deprived of their right to self-determination.

47. The Middle East, birthplace of the three revealed religions and cradle of human civilizations, had always been a model for ethnic and cultural coexistence. Syrian citizens today enjoyed complete equality of rights and duties, and the Syrian Constitution and laws affirmed the importance of combating racism in all its forms. The Syrian Arab Republic was also a party to all international instruments on the elimination of racism.

48. Syria supported the struggle of peoples under colonial rule and foreign occupation for their right to self-determination, as enshrined in the Charter, many General Assembly resolutions and the International Covenants on Human Rights. But volumes of resolutions on the Arab-Israeli conflict had not resulted in self-determination for the Palestinian people in the face of Israel's expansionist policies, continued violations of the Charter and international law, and the lack of international pressure. The end of Israeli occupation of Arab lands, including the occupied Syrian Golan, and the exercise by the Palestinian people of their right to self-determination on their national soil with Jerusalem as their capital were necessary for security and stability in a region considered a barometer of world peace.

49. **Ms. Bachchan** (India) said that it was time to renew the commitments made at the 2001 Durban Conference. The Durban Declaration and Programme of Action had made recommendations to address intolerance and to move towards dignity and equality for all. The battle against racism must be fought within societies, and the promulgation of stringent national laws to address manifestations of racism needed heightened attention.

50. In the light of her Government's historic commitment to the elimination of racism, it was natural that at independence adequate safeguards had been built into the Indian Constitution and Penal Code against the dissemination of ideas that promoted disharmony in the country. The Constitution expressly prohibited discrimination on grounds of race. The instruments of governance in India and non-governmental sector provided the necessary support for eliminating all forms of discrimination.

51. Regarding the right of peoples to self-determination, India had played a leading role in the struggle for decolonization. In the case of Palestine, India maintained its unwavering support for and solidarity with the Palestinian people to attain their inalienable rights, including the right to self-determination. Her delegation fully supported the peace process and the road map.

52. The right to self-determination must not be abused to encourage secession and undermine pluralistic and democratic States. Moreover, self-determination must not be misinterpreted as a right of a group on the basis of ethnicity, religion or race, or used to attempt to undermine the sovereignty and territorial integrity of a State.

53. In that context, her delegation noted the unacceptable effort to raise the issue of Kashmir before the Committee. The State of Jammu and Kashmir was an integral part of the Union of India. Regular elections had repeatedly been held in Jammu and Kashmir, fully meeting the aspirations of its people. That was hardly the case in the instance of the country that had mentioned Kashmir in its statement earlier in the meeting, which pretended to be a protector of human rights while denying such rights to the people of Kashmir in the lands occupied by it. Nevertheless, her delegation looked forward to moving forward the composite bilateral dialogue between the two countries.

54. *Mr. Butagira (Uganda) resumed the Chair.*

55. **Mr. Alaei** (Islamic Republic of Iran) said that contemporary forms of racism were increasingly based on culture, nationality or religion. Expressions of such racism were disseminated in the media, including the Internet, and some policies targeted vulnerable social groups such as indigenous peoples, immigrants, non-nationals and ethnic and religious minorities. A new wave of discrimination, civil-rights abuses and hate crimes against Muslims had spread in many Western societies in the wake of the events of 11 September 2001. After the 7 July 2005 London bombings, that ugly trend had reached its highest degree and, in some cases, had led to loss of life. He drew attention to the

report of the Special Rapporteur on contemporary forms of racism, racial discrimination, xenophobia and related intolerance concerning the situation of Muslim and Arab peoples in various parts of the world (E/CN.4/2005/18/Add.4, para. 27).

56. The international community had a common duty to learn from the bitter experiences of the Second World War, ethnic cleansing in Eastern Europe and Rwanda and similar tragic events resulting from racial discrimination. Currently, evil manifestations of xenophobia and intolerance not only remained stumbling blocks to the full realization of human rights but also posed a serious danger to international peace and security.

57. The Islamic Republic of Iran was one of the pioneering States in combating racism, racial discrimination, xenophobia and related intolerance. Of particular importance in that fight was the establishment of trust among people of different religions, cultures and civilizations, the renunciation of militarism and unilateralism and safeguards to prevent measures taken in the fight against terrorism from discriminating against persons of any faith.

58. Public authorities should not only condemn xenophobic manifestations but ensure that law-enforcement agencies followed through on pledges of non-discrimination. Victims of discrimination must have access to effective legal remedies and the right to seek just and adequate reparation for any damage suffered.

59. The international community must continue its efforts to eradicate racism in general and various phobias in particular and build an inclusive society that truly reflected the ethnic, religious and cultural diversity of its people.

60. **Mr. Abbas** (Iraq) said that the right to self-determination, enshrined in the Charter and the International Covenants on Human Rights, was necessary for peoples to take their rightful place in the international community.

61. Iraq's recent elections, the formation of its first elected Government in nearly a half century, and its new Constitution had demonstrated its commitment to the principles of the United Nations. The Government of Iraq, with the participation of all its people without discrimination, was working to build a society based on humanitarian values, after being held hostage to a tyrannical regime that was anything but humanitarian. The Iraqi people understood the true meaning of self-determination, and needed the help of the international community to overcome the terrorism and murder that stood in the path of their efforts to achieve it.

62. **Ms. Rasheed** (Observer for Palestine) said that the world continued to witness the emergence of many new forms of discrimination and injustice. Throughout the 38 years of Israeli occupation, the Palestinian people had endured constant threats to their national existence and systematic violations of their human rights, both individual and collective. In the previous five years, the human rights violations by the occupying Power had increased dramatically in scale and intensity and the Israeli forces had given no indication of reducing the harshness of their occupation. The Palestinian people continued to be denied not only their right to national identity on their own land but their most fundamental rights as well, including the right to life.

63. The Palestinian people were also being denied their right to self-determination. It was imperative to recall the advisory opinion of the International Court of Justice, by which Israel was under an obligation to cease construction of the wall, dismantle the structure, repeal or render ineffective all legislative and regulatory acts relating thereto and make reparation for all damage caused by its construction. Regrettably, in violation of the Court's ruling and General Assembly resolution ES-10/15, Israel had continued to confiscate Palestinian land and construct the wall in the Occupied Palestinian Territory, thereby swallowing up land required for a future Palestinian state and making the vision of a two-State solution virtually impossible.

64. She therefore called upon the international community to bring an end to the Israeli occupation and all its illegal practices and policies, so as to make way for the establishment of a viable and contiguous Palestinian State with East Jerusalem as its capital. Her delegation was again submitting its draft resolution entitled, "the right of the Palestinian people to self-determination" and trusted that the Member States would send a strong message in solidarity with the Palestinian people by adopting it by consensus.

65. **Mr. Lukyantsev** (Russian Federation) said that the failure to fully appreciate the threat of racism, racial discrimination and xenophobia often had tragic consequences. Despite the lessons learned about

theories of national or racial superiority since the victory over Nazism, in many parts of the world there had been attempts to reinterpret the outcome of the Second World War and rewrite history. A few countries which considered themselves to be democratic and progressive had lamented the days of liberation from fascism, and persons who had fought Nazism on behalf of future generations were undergoing criminal prosecution. The prospects for eradicating racism under such circumstances were thereby called into question. The international community must take a unified stand against those who were trying to gain political capital on the graves of the tens of millions of victims who had been exterminated in the previous century.

66. The Durban Conference had shown the resolve of the overwhelming majority of the international community to eliminate racism. His delegation welcomed the activities of the working groups on the implementation of the Durban Declaration and Programme of Action and on people of African descent, the Special Rapporteur on contemporary forms of racism and the Committee on the Elimination of Racial Discrimination. Furthermore, his Government reaffirmed its invitation to the Special Rapporteur to visit the Russian Federation and hoped that such a visit would take place in the first half of 2006.

67. He drew attention to Commission on Human Rights resolution 2005/5, sponsored by the Russian Federation. The resolution condemned neo-Nazism and glorification of the Nazi movement. Such action, with the connivance and even support of public officials, fuelled international discord, dishonoured the memory of the countless victims of Fascism and the Holocaust, and undermined the establishment of an environment of tolerance among young persons.

68. His delegation was surprised by the position taken by members during the voting in the Commission on that important document, including States which had suffered under Fascism. They had thereby virtually called into doubt the decisions of the Nuremberg Tribunal and the purposes and principles of the United Nations. The Russian Federation planned to submit an equivalent draft resolution during the current session and trusted that the aforementioned States would change their positions and support its initiative, which was strictly thematic rather than country-specific.

The meeting rose at 1.05 p.m.